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Tuesday, 5 October 1993 at 10 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. GLAFCOS CLERIDES, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Cyprus.

Mr. Glafcos Clerides, President of the Republic of Cyprus, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Cyprus, His Excellency Mr. Glafcos Clerides, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President CLERIDES: Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate you on your election as President of the General Assembly. This is not merely a recognition of your long experience and your outstanding ability and diplomatic skill, but also a reflection of the esteem in which your country, Guyana, is held in the United Nations. We are certain that, under your able guidance, the work of this session of the General Assembly will be a landmark in the new international scene and in facing the new challenges for peace, democracy and progress.

I should like also to pay a warm tribute to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the determined leadership that he has demonstrated on vital international issues and for his excellent report on the work of the Organization, which provides much food for thought and indicates various areas of important activities that are the object of soul-searching consideration in this debate.

May I remind Members that, from the beginning of its existence as an independent State after many years of colonial rule until its admission to the United Nations in 1960, Cyprus has consciously made the principles of the United Nations Charter central to its foreign policy, and, within its limited possibilities, has endeavoured in every possible way to be supportive of the Organization.

Frankly, I have to admit that we followed this approach in our foreign policy both as a matter of principle and as a matter of self-interest. We have always believed that the United Nations was mankind's best hope for a system of international order, despite the fact that we were aware of the possibilities of non-adherence to it and of the limitations to the effectiveness of the world Organization resulting from the existence of military blocs. Our self-interest as a small and militarily weak country made us feel the need for the protection of the world Organization, and, as a developing country, we stood to benefit from multilateral technical assistance and know-how.

The Secretary-General's excellent report testifies to the fact that, in today's post-cold-war era, the United Nations is at a crossroads. Some years ago, in the context of the East-West divide and the continuing build-up of nuclear arsenals, we were agonizing in international forums over the future of our civilization. The cold war is finally over, opening up new prospects for positive change in international policies. New prospects are also opening up

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for concerted action and a global approach to the problems we face.

In some parts of the world, the old regimes have collapsed and a move to pluralistic societies and the free market economy is being made. However, the newly acquired freedom has revived old enmities. This is not a strange phenomenon because, as the eminent, late Prime Minister of India, Mr. Nehru, said, the walk to freedom is not an easy one. World developments indicate, and clearly demonstrate, that unless the international community adopts a more unified approach in its understanding of the challenges it faces and promotes the necessary solutions, human rights abuses, increasing insecurity and hunger and suffering will create an explosive situation that will spare no one; we are, though, gradually becoming aware of the complexity and scope that even minor issues acquire in an interdependent world.

The world is full of challenges and opportunities. Our common responsibility is to strengthen the world Organization in order best to respond to these challenges and increase mankind's expectations of peace, prosperity and democracy. These expectations can be met only by making the United Nations more effective, through the implementation of its own resolutions and the mandatory provisions of the Charter.

The General Assembly, based on the principle of sovereign equality, has much to offer and must continue to play its important role under the Charter.

Nowadays, however, the Security Council has a substantially enlarged agenda. As the Charter envisages, it is able to decide and act. At present it is able to act in a more effective manner in the crucial areas of international peace and security. It is evident that the Security Council can now play a much more important role than ever before. This is a welcome development, and within the context of this expanded role a review of its membership to reflect the realities of today's world is highly appropriate.

However, the effectiveness of the Security Council, the highest organ of the United Nations, can be achieved only if it applies the practice of acting with determination. Experience has demonstrated that in those cases where the international community has shown determination to uphold the principles of international instruments and fully apply their provisions, progress can be made. In those cases where unity of purpose has not been shown or interests of nations have been placed above universal principles and rule of law, the problems remain, and peace is elusive.

I wish to point out with emphasis that gaps in international law and practice - failure to uphold international law and human rights, or upholding them in one situation and closing our eyes to their violation in others - must no longer be acceptable behaviour, particularly in the new world order to which we all aspire.

In today's world, where economics plays an increasingly important role, the United Nations, through the Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme and the various specialized agencies, carries out multi-purpose activities for the betterment and economic well-being of people throughout the world. These activities are outlined in the Secretary-General's report, and in the interest of saving time I do not intend to comment on them other than to declare that we fully recognize their importance and support them. We look forward to receiving later in this session the Secretary-General's integrated approach to development issues in his forthcoming agenda for development, which will no doubt appropriately complement his groundbreaking "An Agenda for Peace" in matters of peace and security.

In the light of our overall philosophy, as I indicated earlier, we attach much importance to the effective functioning of the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, the International Court of Justice. The increase of its jurisdiction in contentious cases is encouraging, and we also attach importance to the possibility of clarifying legal points in political disputes through advisory opinions. The International Court of Justice is indeed an integral part of United Nations peace efforts and we support the Secretary-General's proposal that he be authorized to seek advisory opinions from the Court as an important component of the United Nations peacemaking apparatus as a whole.

The Secretariat's role in an improved and more effective United Nations is indisputable, and we pay tribute to the many men and women in the international civil service whose competence and dedication enable the Organization to respond to the ever-increasing demands made of it in today's world conditions. The Secretary-General has already done much in the direction of rationalizing and streamlining the Secretariat, as well as in putting in place effective machinery for inspections and investigations whenever necessary, and he certainly has our support in the additional measures needed to carry out this

Herculean task. We join in recognizing the undoubted need for an adequate financial basis for the Organization and for assessed contributions to be paid early and in full by Member States, in terms of both the regular budget and the costs of peace-keeping. Voluntary contributions are also to be encouraged in order to carry out the tasks at hand, and I might recall that Cyprus, besides endeavouring to play its modest role in as many such cases as its means allow, has also undertaken to make, on a continuous basis, a major contribution towards the financing of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

Past and recent experience in every region of the world has demonstrated that the protection and promotion of human rights is an indispensable ingredient of a stable world order. Over the years the United Nations has played its full part in affirming human equality, which is, indeed, the heart of all rights, and in building bridges across the divides of race, ethnicity, culture, socio-economic disparities and political philosophies. Democracy and human rights are two of the United Nations Charter's most cherished principles, and they have always figured prominently in United Nations conferences.

Democracy is the only system of government that can safeguard the liberty of the people, respect for human rights and quality of life. We have a duty to remain vigilant and continue to look for ways in which these new opportunities presented by world developments may be used for the promotion of international peace, the advancement of the rule of law and the protection of human rights.

The world community must clearly oppose chauvinistic nationalism, take a clear-cut stand against policies of "ethnic cleansing" and unequivocally continue making all efforts until we achieve the complete dismantlement of the unjust and inhumane social systems based on ethnic political segregation and the development and consolidation of a non-racial, democratic South Africa.

The effective promotion of human rights cannot be separated from the global trend towards democratization. Cyprus is in the forefront of States that have become party to treaties for the protection of human rights, both at the global level, within the United Nations, and at the regional level, primarily through the Council of Europe. We are especially sensitive on this subject, since one large component of the Cyprus problem in its present dimensions is the massive violation of the human rights of the displaced persons who have been evicted by force from their homes by the Turkish forces of occupation. Their homes and properties have been usurped by illegal settlers imported from Turkey to Cyprus in an effort by the aggressor to change the demographic composition of the population of Cyprus.

All these flagrant violations of human rights have been committed by Turkey, a Member of the United Nations, despite General Assembly and Security Council resolutions calling on all United Nations Members to respect the independence and territorial integrity of the Republic, avoid any actions which could change the demographic composition of the population of Cyprus, withdraw all foreign forces from the territory of the Republic and allow the return of the refugees to their homes under conditions of safety.

Cyprus is a case in point of the complete defiance of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions by one of its members. In reality, the intransigence of the Turkish side, which has rendered every effort to find a solution impossible, accounts for the hesitation of the Security Council to adopt measures for compliance with its resolutions. If a viable and lasting solution of the Cyprus problem is to be arrived at without further delay and a federally united State is to be established without occupation troops and settlers, concerted action is required by the international community as a whole.

It is not only in the solution of the Cyprus problem that Turkey shows intransigence. The Turkish intransigence extends to purely humanitarian issues, such as cooperation in ascertaining the fate of missing persons and in implementing the third Vienna agreement regarding persons enclaved in occupied areas.

I wish to express appreciation for the support extended to Cyprus by the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Security Council. We consider a good omen of further determined action the declaration of the Secretary-General in his most recent report to the Security Council on Cyprus, and the Council's positive response to it, that unless progress is made on the Cyprus problem he will request the Security Council to consider alternative ways of securing compliance with the many resolutions of the United Nations on Cyprus.

We have had occasion in the past to express our support for the constructive suggestions of the Secretary-General for improving the potential of United Nations peace-keeping operations in today's increasing demand for them, including the training of personnel, the strengthening of the Department of Peace-keeping

Operations and the earmarking of appropriate equipment and personnel for use by the United Nations. We are encouraged that progress has been made in all these areas and in the setting up of a peace-keeping Reserve Fund, but, in view of the ever-increasing demands and the worsening of financial problems associated with these operations, complacency is not justified and we should all continue to do our best to assist in discharging this major responsibility thrust on our Organization.

With regard to peace-keeping, it has been said - not without justification - that the United Nations should avoid open-ended involvement in peace-keeping operations. Cyprus has been pointed out as an example of over-long United Nations peace-keeping involvement. The broader lesson to be drawn from the experience of United Nations involvement in peace-keeping and peacemaking in Cyprus is that, so long as one of the parties concerned is not willing to comply with the dictates of the international community as spelt out in unanimously adopted and binding resolutions of the Security Council; and so long as the members of the international community, and more particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, are not willing or able to act effectively in order to implement resolutions for which they voted, peacemaking will lag behind peace-keeping, resulting in the indefinite perpetuation of the problem and of the peace-keeping operation concerned. This is, obviously, an unsatisfactory situation - unsatisfactory to the Government and the country directly concerned; unsatisfactory to the countries contributing to the cost of the peace-keeping operation; and of course, unsatisfactory to the United Nations. I submit that the answer lies not in abandoning the peace-keeping effort and thereby abdicating responsibility, leaving the weak at the mercy of the strong and striking a blow against longstanding efforts to solve the problem, but in pressing on with effective peacemaking through the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions by all available means, so as to reach a solution consistent with the Charter and the United Nations resolutions. Cyprus is indeed a test-case, not, however, with regard to peace-keeping, but with regard to the effectiveness of the United Nations in peacemaking.

If I set out at some length our views on "An Agenda for Peace", I did so not only because it is very important, but also because Cyprus is itself a case-study of most of the problems it raises. I shall refrain from commenting on the long litany listed in this year's report of international problems in which the Organization is actively engaged and which extend to all five continents. Each presents its own complications and special characteristics. They provide a measure of the enormous expectations placed upon the United Nations, the awesome burden of the Secretary-General's responsibilities, and the respect and admiration he deserves in carrying out these responsibilities. As he rightly points out:

> "The United Nations, by undertaking a range of problems as wide as the globe itself, must be expected to achieve successes but also to experience failure." (*A/48/1, para. 512*)

While in the past few years the world has witnessed the creation of new areas of tension and conflict through the unleashing of destructive and centrifugal forces of excessive nationalism and ethnic strife, there have also been some notable successes through the solution of several regional issues and the withdrawal of foreign forces following the end of cold-war antagonism. We have witnessed in many parts of the world the triumph of democracy and the emergence of free-market economies. More concretely, there has been the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the historic reunification of Germany; major progress towards ending the odious practice of apartheid in South Africa has been achieved; and, as recently as last month, the historic accord between Israel and the PLO was signed at the White House, marking a new era in the Middle East. All three situations had appeared to present the insurmountable problems of unending and seemingly irreconcilable conflicts. And yet, with vision and imagination, the political will for solutions was found.

In contrast, the problem with which my own country has been confronted for too long has remained intractable, despite the existence of unanimously adopted United Nations resolutions and despite the mutually acceptable procedure of the good offices of the United Nations Secretary-General. In our view, the problem is solvable and must be solved, yet the efforts of many years have come to no result owing to Turkish intransigence backed by Turkish military might.

We remain committed to reaching a peaceful solution on the basis of the United Nations resolutions and the high-level agreements. As clearly emerges from successive reports of the Secretary-General, we have cooperated with him in all sincerity in the exercise of his good offices for an overall solution, and we have responded positively to his proposals for the adoption, as a first step, of the confidence-building measures and in particular the placing of Famagusta and the opening of the Nicosia airport under United Nations administration.

In 1945, the founding fathers signed the Charter in San Francisco, in the aftermath of a devastating war, with the vision of establishing the foundations of a better and more peaceful world. As it nears its fiftieth anniversary, a watershed in its history, the United Nations is again facing a major challenge in a rapidly changing international climate. Peoples and nations all over the world place growing expectations in the Organization's response to the new summons for a universal alliance for peace and justice, for democracy, development and international legal order. At the same time, the ominous phenomena of ethnic strife, destructive nationalism, widespread poverty and social injustice are undermining the vital role of the United Nations in opposing aggression and maintaining international peace, and are thus posing new challenges.

As the Organization is restructuring itself in order to meet these challenges more effectively, it is clear that, by and large, the Charter has stood the test of time. As we approach the milestone of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization, let us agree to spare no effort to make it more effective, and let us look upon the Charter not merely as a code of international behaviour that is difficult to live up to and comply with, but as a reasonable and practical model for everyday international behaviour and political ethics.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Cyprus for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Glafcos Clerides, President of Cyprus, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. ZHELYU ZHELEV, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Mr. Zhelyu Zhelev, President of the Republic of Bulgaria, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, His Excellency Mr. Zhelyu Zhelev, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President ZHELEV *(spoke in Bulgarian, English text furnished by the delegation):* I would first of all like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to this responsible post, and to wish you success.

On behalf of the Republic of Bulgaria, let me congratulate the delegations of the States that have joined the United Nations as new Members this year - the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Eritrea, Monaco and Andorra.

Three years ago, in this same Hall, I had the honour of addressing the world forum. My message was on behalf of democratic Bulgaria, a country where changes fully and genuinely match the ideals and values uniting the nations in the world Organization. Since then, as indeed over the past year, under the Bulgarian presidency of the General Assembly, we have witnessed diverse and often contradicting trends in international life. If there is a dominating feeling, though, it is one of optimism and of trust, on the part of both Governments and nations, in the United Nations as a spokesman for and guarantor of the political will of the world community for peace and sustainable democratic development. We have seen a number of encouraging examples of this.

The democratic changes in Eastern Europe have added an element of dynamism to building European unity and the European civil society, a society open to the rest of the world. Important forums of the European Community, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe provide a frame and a foundation for the emerging European unity and security. Bulgaria has been an active participant in the European organizations. It will be the first post-Communist country to assume the presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the oldest European organization - the Council of Europe. It is also a coordinator of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Group, bringing together the countries of that region.

After the Berlin wall, the walls of Jericho came tumbling down. There began the long-expected unraveling of the Gordian knot in the Middle East, the place where three world cultural and religious traditions coexist. We welcome also the development of democratic processes in South Africa that will lead to the establishment of a united and non-racial society.

Humanity has bid farewell to chemical weapons; and it has succeeded in convening world conferences on subjects believed until recently to defy consensus, such as human rights and protection for the victims of war.

The democratic changes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union continue to be an important condition for the positive changes in international life at the turn of this century. The heightened attention of the world community to the social and political tensions in Moscow is as understandable as is the broad international support for the reform-minded and democratic forces in Russia, support with which Bulgaria fully agrees. The dramatic events in Moscow which we witnessed over the weekend prove how difficult and painful the transition from post-Communist society to democracy and a market economy is, and what dangers and risks it entails. The United Nations cannot simply stand by and watch with indifference the difficulties of the countries in transition. If we are to live up to the name "United Nations" we have to render our moral, political and financial support to these nations.

The collapse of totalitarian rule, and the breakup of the Soviet empire and of the Warsaw Treaty, created an unexpected paradox: less danger to world peace and, at the same time, less peace in the world and more challenges and trials for the United Nations.

Regional conflicts have proved to be a key problem for the new democracies. Think of the consequences of the world community's failure to handle the war in the former Yugoslavia! The stakes are always high but they are even higher in the Balkans where conflicts threaten to spill over and embroil other States.

Bulgaria's civilized and good-neighbourly Balkan policy entitles it now, as indeed at the very outset of the Yugoslav crisis, to insist on firm judgement and energetic steps on the part of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretary-General to contain and end the barbaric war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to prevent other smouldering conflicts in former Yugoslavia from flaring up.

Recent attempts to find concerted ways of coordinating the peace-keeping efforts of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have been followed with keen interest in Bulgaria. We have already voiced our support for the constructive engagement of President Clinton's Administration, notably the preventive stationing of a contingent of troops under a United Nations flag in Macedonia.

Bulgaria is against re-drawing borders and gaining territory by force. It has been consistent in its position in favour of a peaceful solution of the Yugoslav crisis.

By virtue of its geopolitical situation, Bulgaria has a key role to play in implementing the economic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. We share the longest land border with Serbia and we are not involved, either directly or indirectly, in the hostilities in former Yugoslavia. Without Bulgaria the sanctions will be doomed to failure. Fully aware of our responsibility, we adhere strictly to the relevant resolutions of the Security Council in the face of great economic sacrifice. Measured against our potential, the losses are indeed huge. The embargo has closed Bulgaria's direct route to the markets of Western Europe. Consequently, its losses for 1992 were estimated - with expert assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - at $943.6 million. The 1993 figure is expected to be several times higher. The effect of the sanctions may lead to halting and thwarting economic reform, as well as jeopardizing the democratic process and social peace in Bulgaria. In other words, the price Bulgaria is paying for peace and security in the Balkans and in Europe may prove fatal to its internal peace and stability. Direct losses from the sanctions against former Yugoslavia, Iraq and Libya, are commensurate with one half of Bulgaria's external debt to commercial creditor banks, and they dim the prospects for economic recovery, development and integration into the world community.

As a State Member of the United Nations Bulgaria fulfils its international obligations in good faith, convinced that any civilized country concerned about world security should uphold a common cause - even at the cost of sacrifice. Yet, is it not fair for a country in our position to seek assistance and understanding from the world Organization and its Member States?

There is an urgent need to devise a working mechanism of awarding compensation to Member States which sustain losses as a result of the strict implementation of the sanctions imposed by the Security Council. The provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter are equally important and should be applied strictly. Article 50 of the Charter could be backed up by relevant agreements for concrete aid to Member States affected by sanctions against third countries. The forms of compensation could include, among others, measures to ease the economic situation of the affected country, such as concluding stand-by agreements with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), facilitating the debt-servicing and settlement procedure, financing major transport and communication infrastructure projects nationally and regionally - in our case, new bridges on the River Danube, an international airport, motorways linking Bulgaria and Greece, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Albania such as Thessaloniki-Vidin and

Sofia-Skopje-Tirana - speeding up the ratification of the European Association Agreement between Bulgaria and the European Community and an earlier accession to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

The Bulgarian delegation at this session of the General Assembly will put forward proposals on some of the above issues. We rely on the support and cooperation of the States Members of the Organization in this regard.

Considering that no international organization at the moment is in a position to award direct compensation for losses sustained as a result of economic sanctions, the indirect ways of compensation could be of crucial importance.

The problem of international sanctions and compensation merits serious attention. It calls for an in-depth analysis, as it vitally concerns a number of States Members of the United Nations. The time is ripe to look into these issues at a special forum for which Bulgaria offers its hospitality.

United Nations peace-keeping operations have constituted a most significant and prominent part of the world Organization's work over the past year. I could not emphasize more the importance of the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace", which developed the concept of crisis management through preventive diplomacy. Bulgaria supported this political strategy and backed up its words with actions by sending Blue Helmets to Cambodia.

Once again, the international community seems to have been inadequately prepared for mounting such operations. The question of the safety of United Nations personnel proved particularly poignant. Bulgaria lost 10 volunteers in Cambodia, not to mention the cost of its involvement, which has not yet been fully estimated.

Early warning for potential conflicts calls for effective international mechanisms to monitor the human rights situation, including that of individuals from minority groups - because conflicts brew wherever individual human rights are trampled upon, wherever the universal values of modern civilization are replaced by survival instincts and political pluralism and the diversity of ideas, by intolerance, xenophobia, racism, religious and political bigotry and violence. The idea of creating a new post within the United Nations system, that of a high commissioner for human rights, is an expression of the desire to step up international cooperation in this field. We are prepared to participate actively in discussing this matter.

Let us look at the United Nations potential for crisis management. Many of the proposed ideas hold out promise. But if they are to materialize, the United Nations must live up to its coordinating, organizing and mobilizing role in finding the relevant political and military means. In the Yugoslav crisis, for instance, the Euro-Atlantic and European security organizations could have taken up some of its functions.

Here is a case in point. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has undergone a significant evolution in its attitude towards the conflict. As well as becoming a major challenge, the Yugoslav crisis has provided an impetus for the alliance to review its priorities and objectives.

Bulgaria openly declares its readiness to enhance its cooperation - including as a full member - with NATO and its member States. Our good bilateral relations and security cooperation with Turkey and Greece illustrate clearly our approach and intentions. It would be beneficial to Balkan and European security if these relations could be developed further into cooperation between allies within NATO. Bulgaria is willing and able to shoulder responsibility and act as a reliable partner.

Addressing today's global social and economic problems calls for new approaches in the work of the United Nations specialized bodies in these areas. New ways and means should be sought to facilitate access to technical assistance and modern technologies. There is a need for daring and pragmatic initiatives in areas such as trade liberalization, the future of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), external debt, labour migration, unemployment, environmental safety and the proliferation of environmentally friendly technologies. The Republic of Bulgaria is ready to cooperate in any of the above-mentioned efforts as a member of various United Nations bodies, including possibly the Economic and Social Council.

The strengthening of the regime of the Treaty on the non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the preparation for the review Conference in 1995 are of paramount importance. Bulgaria shares the view that the non-proliferation Treaty should become universal and be of indefinite duration.

Bulgaria's expectations for the future role and functions of the United Nations determine its attitude towards the ongoing reform of the world Organization. On the basis of its history of nearly 50 years, the Member States can identify elements of its Charter and structure that need revision and others that are universal and lasting and whose validity should not be questioned. Clearly, such decisions can be reached only after serious debate and by consensus of the Member States, notably the permanent members of the Security Council. It is essential to preserve the Security Council as an effective decision-making mechanism if its representation is broadened. The powers and responsibility of the Secretary-General will certainly change, with an increasing emphasis on his diplomatic and peace-making efforts.

The Bulgarian delegation is taking part in the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly and making its contribution as an active member of the international community. Our commitment to the problems and the future of the Organization is prompted by our awareness of being among the staunchest supporters of its cause and noble missions.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Bulgaria for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Zhelyu Zhelev, President of the Republic of Bulgaria, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY HIS SERENE HIGHNESS PRINCE HANS-ADAM II OF LIECHTENSTEIN, HEAD OF STATE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein, His Serene Highness Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein.

His Serene Highness Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein, Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein, His Serene Highness Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Prince HANS-ADAM II of Liechtenstein: Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly and to express our conviction that your experience and diplomatic skills will make a valuable contribution to the work of this august body. My delegation will spare no effort to support you in the fulfilment of your tasks. I should also like to avail myself of this opportunity to thank your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for the way he conducted the work of the General Assembly during a difficult period.

Over the last eight months, this Organization has been able to welcome six new Member States: Slovakia, the Czech Republic, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Monaco, Eritrea and Andorra, thus enhancing the universality of the United Nations.

Since the last session of the General Assembly we have been witness to historic gains in regional disputes. The signing of the peace agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization is a unique breakthrough and will, it is hoped, lead to a just and lasting peace for the region. When the President of the African National Congress, Mr. Nelson Mandela, spoke in this Hall on 24 September, he outlined the historic advances made towards democracy in South Africa. We are very hopeful that a new South Africa will play a vital role in the development of the African continent.

My country was admitted to the United Nations on 18 September 1990 and has tried over the last three years to maintain as active a presence and participation as possible. While Liechtenstein was the 160th Member in 1990, the Organization today has 184 members. This considerable increase in the Organization's membership makes it clear that the ongoing discussion of equitable representation on and expansion of the Security Council's membership is timely and necessary.

In our view, the priorities in reforming the Security Council are cohesion and effectiveness. It is of great importance, however, that the discussion of reforms also include the question of the Security Council's work, since broad support for its actions is an indispensable condition of its legitimacy, which can only be guaranteed by enhanced transparency and cooperation with other Member States. Article 23 of the Charter establishes that the contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security is the first criterion for membership in the Council; it is obvious that the second criterion - equitable geographical distribution - has so far not been given due attention. In view of the obvious importance of the

Security Council's composition, we favour taking the necessary time to make adjustments beneficial to the credibility of the Organization as a whole.

The new effectiveness of the Security Council is manifested, among other ways, by the recent considerable increase of peace-keeping and peacemaking missions. These operations are closely observed by the public and are often taken as a yardstick for the activities of the United Nations as a whole. While we think it important to give more attention to other fields, such as that of social development, we are aware of the impact that the failure or success of peace-keeping activities can have on the credibility of the Organization. In our view, the United Nations should not engage in an ever-increasing number of peace-keeping missions all over the world. A more important role should be given to preventive diplomacy, which can be carried out by regional organizations or arrangements such as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The participating States consider the CSCE a regional arrangement in the sense of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, and as such it provides an important link between European and global security. Liechtenstein, as a participating State, believes that enhancement of the cooperation with the CSCE is crucial; my country favours the idea of granting observer status to that organization and has supported the request for the inclusion of an additional item to this effect in the agenda of the forty-eighth session.

Preventive diplomacy cannot, however, replace peace-keeping, and the United Nations must remain as active in that field as is necessary. It must be pointed out that the existing infrastructure in New York is not sufficient to cope with the wide range of tasks, and urgently needs to be improved.

Deplorable events in the recent past have made it clear that there is not sufficient protection of civil and military personnel involved in peace-keeping missions. We therefore wholeheartedly welcome the inclusion of a new agenda item proposed by the delegation of New Zealand regarding the question of responsibility for attacks on United Nations and associated personnel and measures to ensure that those responsible for such attacks are brought to justice.

With the growing involvement of the United Nations in complex conflicts, the Organization's role has been transformed into a more active and comprehensive one. As a result, relief workers expose their lives to great risk in their efforts to alleviate human suffering. My delegation believes that it simply cannot be tolerated that relief workers, who themselves want to save lives, should become targets. The United Nations should make it very clear that these acts of violence will not go unpunished. The emblems of the United Nations, the Red Cross and the Red Crescent must be respected.

Humanitarian assistance today faces the challenge of many complex emergency situations. These challenges must be met on the basis of the principles of neutrality, impartiality and humanity; humanitarian aid must not be politicized. When we are called upon to give proof of our solidarity, we must provide the necessary financial means. We are, however, also called upon to address the root causes of many disasters, such as poverty, population increase and civil and ethnic strife. Imbalances feed misery; they not only are unfair but are dangerous.

Forty-five years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a great deal remains to be done in this field, to which we attach particular importance. The World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993 was a very important event, and we all know how difficult it was to adopt the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. This text can constitute a milestone in the history of the United Nations only if it is followed by determined action by the General Assembly in the spirit of the Vienna Declaration. In our view, it is of the utmost importance that the the Centre for Human Rights be given the resources necessary to enable it to carry out its tasks even more efficiently. In addition, the creation of the post of high commissioner for human rights is a laudable initiative, and the General Assembly should provide him or her with a strong mandate within the already existing structures.

It is a well-known fact that the financial situation of the United Nations is disastrous. In his speech of 26 August, the Secretary-General accordingly outlined initial steps to cope with this crisis. The measures taken by the Secretary-General seem to be unavoidable, and we hope they will not have a negative impact on the work of the General Assembly. In our view, urgent action by the General Assembly is needed to prevent further deterioration, which could have serious consequences. Punctual and full payment of the assessed contributions must be made by all States and arrears must be paid in full and promptly. Proposals aimed at ensuring proper utilization of resources and establishing adequate accountability within the United Nations should be discussed thoroughly and expeditiously. Finally, an overall reform of the financial sector seems to be necessary. All

suggestions which might contribute to this aim, especially those contained in the so-called Volcker-Ogata report, should be studied with due attention.

Much has been said about the changes that have taken place since the ending of the cold war. Unfortunately we cannot say that all these changes have been positive. To the infinite regret and dismay of the whole international community, we have continued to witness the outbreak of a great number of ethnic and national conflicts, accompanied by the untold suffering of innocent people. There must be a better way for the world to manage its affairs. While tensions within and between communities may be an inevitable part of the human condition, it is, in our view, of the utmost importance that ways be found to defuse them peacefully and without bloodshed.

In this context, I should like to refer briefly again to an idea which might take us a step in the right direction and which I introduced when I had the great honour to address the General Assembly for the first time at its forty-sixth session, very soon after Liechtenstein became a Member of the United Nations. On that occasion, I ventured to suggest that a basis for some solutions could be found within the principle of self-determination. The value of this great principle has been fully demonstrated in the traditional context of decolonization. But it need not be limited to that context. Applied also to communities within States, and allowing for them to have different levels of autonomy according to the particular circumstances of different communities, it could perhaps defuse many of the tensions which are such a potent source of conflict. Such principles, placed within a suitable framework, would give an effective and practical dimension to the principle of self-determination which it has sometimes seemed to lack. Eventually such provisions could perhaps come to be elaborated in a convention to be of general application.

Since first putting those thoughts before this Assembly, we in Liechtenstein have been encouraged by the degree of interest which has been shown in them. Our ideas are flexible, although our objective - which is to find practical and effective ways of avoiding, or at least reducing, tensions between communities - remains firm. We have refined our initial thoughts on the subject in the light of comments made by others, and we developed our ideas further at the last session of the General Assembly, both during debates in the Third Committee and when the Head of Government addressed the Assembly in the course of the general debate.

On that occasion, the Head of Government announced that the Government of Liechtenstein would be inviting each Government represented in the Assembly, including Observers, to nominate an independent expert to attend an informal meeting of experts in Liechtenstein to discuss these matters further. That meeting took place from 16 to 18 March this year, attended by participants nominated by 46 States and international and non-governmental organizations. I attended it myself throughout, and can say personally how valuable we found the contributions participants made to the development of our thinking. Perhaps I might be allowed to take this opportunity to thank them all for their participation in what we see as an important and valuable project.

Over the past two years we have, in these various ways, carried forward our belief that, in the ideas first put forward to Assembly in 1991, the international community may find some way forward in its search for ways of avoiding the kind of internal conflicts which cause ever-increasing human suffering and which are increasingly dangerous for the peace and safety of our world. To make further progress we decided this year to seek to inscribe an item on the Assembly's agenda which would enable our ideas to be fully discussed by the full membership of the United Nations. We are grateful that our proposal was accepted and now appears on the agenda for this session as item 108 (b), entitled "Right of peoples to self-determination: Effective realization of the right of self-determination through autonomy". We look forward to the debate which will follow, and I hope to be able to participate myself in at least part of it. We hope that in the light of what may be said in the debate, the Assembly will agree that there is, in the ideas which we have put forward, something valuable which merits further consideration and elaboration.

We do not underestimate the difficulties ahead. We are aware of the sensitivities of this whole subject, especially in these times. Great though those difficulties and sensitivities may be for some States, we are convinced that the needs of the international community are even more pressing. The dangers, horrors and suffering to which tensions between communities within States can give rise, and of which we sadly have daily reminders, make it essential for the international community to make every effort to open up new thinking in this field in order to find practical and effective means for further promoting the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

We consider it a great privilege to have an Organization such as the United Nations, founded upon a Charter which encompasses the highest ideals of humankind. I wish to take this opportunity to reaffirm my country's commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein for the statement he has just made.

His Serene Highness Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein, Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (*continued*)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. DEMBRI (Algeria) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Your unanimous election, Sir, to the presidency of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly represents a just recognition of your great diplomatic experience, your human qualities and your constant commitment to the promotion of dialogue and multilateral cooperation in the service of peace, security and development.

I should like to congratulate you most warmly on the well-deserved tribute from the international community both to you personally and to your country. I am particularly pleased that the prestigious responsibility of guiding the work of the General Assembly has been given this year to an eminent son of Guyana, a country which, side-by-side with Algeria, has always been resolutely in the forefront of the defence of the cause of peace, justice, progress and understanding among nations.

Your predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, firmly and tactfully conducted a busy and productive forty-seventh session. We wish to express our deep gratitude to him for a mission accomplished with open-mindedness and dedication.

I also wish to pay special tribute to the Secretary-General of our Organization, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who has spared no effort in making the United Nations rise to the many and complex challenges of a crucial period in the development of international relations. His foresight, courage and initiative have won him the esteem of all. His persevering activity bears for the United Nations the promise of the renewal after which our peoples fervently aspire.

Algeria extends a warm welcome to the new Member States which have joined our Organization, and is gratified that their accession to the membership of the United Nations will contribute to the achievement of its objectives in the areas of peace and development.

In recent years, the history of the world has accelerated its pace considerably. Rapid and profound changes have put paid to an international order that had long been frozen in place by the cold war. However, far from moving steadily toward the achievement of a well-ordered international society, those changes have generated the makings of a disquieting explosion. While the world changes under our very eyes, we are unable to grasp and take cognizance of the laws that govern such change. This dynamic, and the major upheavals it causes, have shaped a new geopolitical configuration in many parts of the world that has affected the lives of many of its peoples. Given this type of change, wnerein inter-State relations are jostled by a proliferation of protagonists, of ambitions and gambles, and of the methods of international action there is a need for a collective effort to revitalize both our means of knowing and our methods of action. In short, we need to rethink the world order. We must, as a community of nations, succeed in controlling the changes which are taking place and the unwieldy trends that are now emerging. In this maelstrom of historical change, this period of transition with all its hesitations and emerging global dangers, the thing that attracts one's attention more than any other is the hope, the promise of a new world order that must be fashioned side by side with the daily suffering that goes on in the world and which we cannot ignore.

Indeed, in spite of the glowing promises of peace and international cooperation, the world ord r that is taking shape now not only contains too many old hotbeds of tension, but also gives rise to new mushrooming conflicts. Tensions between ethnic and religious groups are increasing and are being exacerbated while whole regions, and even entire continents, are being marginalized in a most atrocious manner. The right of peoples to self-determination is being violated and obstructed here and there. Hunger and poverty are expanding. Imbalances in the world economy are deepening and worsening. All of these situations pose challenges to the international community that call for urgent and concerted action.

It is therefore up to us - and this is the challenge faced by all nations that are bound by an ever-growing interdependence - to see to it that the ideals of justice and peace prevail, that new possibilities for the settlement of certain regional conflicts and for general and complete disarmament lead to comprehensive action eliminating the root causes of conflicts while, at the same time, promoting economic and social development, a prerequisite for international peace and security.

This is why it is appropriate to underscore here the fact that the Agenda for Peace (A/47/277), whose importance is recognized everywhere, will achieve its objectives only if it is accompanied by an agenda for development; for peace and development are closely interrelated, and conflicts too often take root in the soil of injustice and poverty. It is obvious that the future of the system of collective security which we wish to build will depend to a great extent on our ability to forge a consensus on the different aspects contained in the Agenda for Peace. This means that it is necessary for us to continue, collectively and without bias, to consider those aspects of the Secretary-General's report about which differences persist or which require further elaboration and consideration.

The encouraging progress achieved in strengthening the capability of the United Nations in the areas of active preventive diplomacy, as well as in peace-keeping and peacemaking operations, should be welcomed, but a great deal remains to be done in this field if we are to make better use of all the experience gained in those areas by the United Nations. We should see to it that our action remains strictly faithful to the goals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Algeria, which is honoured to participate actively and concretely in peace-keeping operations, will continue to do its share in this collective endeavour in the service of peace.

The restructuring, revitalization and rationalization of the structures of the organs of the United Nations and their working methods have made considerable progress. However, this process, which is not an end in itself, will produce its full effects only if the Member States, and particularly the developed countries, reaffirm and strengthen their commitment to the United Nations and renew their political and financial support for its activities, particularly in the economic and social spheres.

It is this exacting and responsible approach that my country consistently promotes in all the areas of cooperation in which it takes part. In so doing, Algeria conducts its own action within the context of the efforts by the Non-Aligned Movement toward greater democratization of the United Nations and better balance between the spheres of competence of its organs. In our view, it is time we reflected collectively on how to reform the Security Council, with a view to broadening its composition, improving its working methods and making it more accountable for its action to the entire international community in whose name it adopts its resolutions. A more representative, more transparent Security Council that would be more cognizant of the views and concerns of all; a General Assembly that would fully play its role in activating, guiding and supervising; and a United Nations system that would be more coherent and better coordinated in carrying out its development tasks: these are the three pivotal approaches that may give to the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization significant political scope and operational content and generate the makings of a new beginning. The credibility of the United Nations and the effectiveness of its action depend on this, as do international peace, security and cooperation.

All the initiatives by my country at the national and regional levels are inspired by the ideals of peace, justice and cooperation. The national-renewal plan upon which Algeria has embarked in the interests of political stability, the consolidation of the democratic process, the revitalization of economic growth and the upholding of the rule of law is a plan that translates into action our resolve to guarantee, for all Algerians, the rights to security and well-being in a just, modern and democratic society.

Given this determination, our efforts in combating terrorism and our efforts aimed at providing the conditions for real growth stem from the same overriding priority, that of meeting the expectations of our people be fulfilled by restoring the authority of the State and creating the conditions for an orderly transition that would make possible stable and coherent progress towards a market economy through viable and orderly reforms.

Such a vast enterprise must find its expression and derive its support from an active foreign policy based on the principles and ideals of non-alignment and geared towards the promotion of peace, stability and cooperation at the regional and international levels.

In this spirit, Algeria works steadily and resolutely for success in the process of building a united Maghreb. The important achievements that have been made so far, which will help us to benefit from the complementary nature of the countries of the union of the Arab Maghreb, confirm

that the dynamics of this unifying process have enabled us to mobilize our energies, despite certain persistent problems that affect regional stability.

Our country's central position in the region, its resolve to reinforce and promote the building of the Maghreb and its commitment to international legality have prompted it to encourage the kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario Front to turn to direct, sincere, constructive dialogue that can facilitate the implementation of the peace plan prepared jointly by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, with the full agreement of the two parties concerned.

It is important, now more than ever before, that the dialogue which was initiated at El-Ayoun between Morocco and the Polisario Front should resume and continue at an authoritative level. Algeria, for its part, hopes that the two parties will choose the path of reason and that will do all in their power to resolve outstanding questions in a serious manner and without delay, thus promoting the holding of a free and orderly referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara. Algeria is convinced that a just a lasting solution to the question of Western Sahara can promote stability and peace in the region. We therefore hope that the international community, as well as the United Nations and its Secretary-General, will redouble efforts to ensure, in the best conditions of credibility and impartiality, implementation of the United Nations settlement plan, with the complete cooperation of the two parties.

The same applies to the Mediterranean region. In fact, Algeria has always worked to make that region, with the participation of all the States concerned, one of peace, stability and mutually advantageous cooperation. It is to this end that we continue to work for the consolidation and deepening of political agreement in our region and for the establishment of new types of cooperation. Algeria is therefore making constant efforts to have the forum of "5 + 5" activated, as this is a promising framework for cooperation between North and South in the Mediterranean.

It is in the field of disarmament that the end of the cold war has produced tangible results most rapidly. However, considerable work remains to be done, especially by the nuclear Powers. The final cessation of nuclear testing in all environments and the renunciation of the development of new weapon systems are objectives the attainment of which is now within the reach of the international community - provided, of course, that the nuclear Powers go beyond current agreements and summon up the necessary political will for this purpose.

In this context, Algeria notes with interest and with hope the proposals made from this rostrum on 27 September by the President of the United States of America. The complete elimination of all weapons of mass destruction is, in fact, part of the logic of history. The conclusion of the Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons has shown that this objective is no longer Utopian. Any approach to the question of disarmament and international security and, in the final analysis, to the question of peace should be universal in scope. This is a conviction that is being reiterated time after time by Algeria and by the Non-Aligned Movement. Disarmament, if it is to be lasting, must take account of all aspects of the situation, and not of the military dimension alone. It is now clear that, in an increasingly interdependent world, peace and security cannot be dissociated from their natural corollaries - socio-economic development and the promotion of all human rights.

The protection and promotion of human rights - all human rights - is a high priority for Algeria. Therefore, we are pleased at the positive results of the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna, which expressed support for an integrated and global approach to human rights, whose civil, political, economic and social aspects reinforce and complement each other.

Algeria, which subscribes completely to this view and endorses this approach, is now at a juncture that makes it an obligation of the State to give priority to human rights, to protection of the fundamental right to life and to personal security. In this context, the restoration of public order and the struggle against terrorism are manifestations of Algeria's determination to give a firm guarantee of the development of human rights and the building of a lasting democracy based on the rule of law, the changeover of political power between parties and republican principles.

This declared struggle against terrorism has an internal aspect, but it has international dimensions as well. Here we should like to make it abundantly clear that Algeria will continue to oppose, firmly and with the utmost determination, every outside attempt at destabilization and that it will tolerate no interference in its internal affairs. It is Algeria's belief that the international community must assert itself and mobilize its energy to defeat the modern barbarity of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

It is therefore important for the deliberations at this session of the General Assembly vigorously to lead to the formulation of an international convention on the prevention and repression of terrorism.

While a number of regional conflicts are on the way to pacification and lasting settlement, others, however, there is no peaceful, just solution in sight.

In the Middle East, which has been buffeted for decades by waves of suffering and confrontation, new prospects are emerging. Algeria welcomed the recent agreement between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel and expressed the hope that it would be the first step towards an overall settlement of the Middle East conflict in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Now as in the past, Algeria which stands firmly behind the independence of decision-making by the Palestinian leaders calls upon the Palestinians to close ranks and reaffirms its support for the PLO.

At this crucial stage for the future of the region, Algeria believes that the international community continues to be responsible for building peace. For that peace to be genuine and lasting, it must be comprehensive and must meet the national aspirations of the Palestinian people and restore all the territories occupied by Israel, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

As an Arab country, Algeria, naturally, is intimately involved in the future of the Arab world. Overcoming the aftermath of the Gulf war ought to open the way to the inter-Arab reconciliation for which our peoples fervently hope. Since Iraq has undertaken to meet fully all the obligations stemming from Security Council resolutions and since international law has established the geographical basis for peaceful neigbourliness between Iraq and Kuwait, we hope that the outstanding humanitarian questions will soon be resolved so that the collective conscience of the Arab peoples may be able finally to heal itself of the scars of the Gulf war.

My country reaffirms its support for the Government of the United Arab Emirates in its legitimate efforts to regain sovereignty over the three islands under illegal foreign occupation.

Algeria welcomes with hope the positive developments in South Africa, despite the continuing violence and other factors that endanger peace. The agreement to set up the Transitional Executive Council holds promise for the speedy achievement of a united, democratic, non-racial South Africa. Chairman Nelson Mandela's call from this rostrum for the lifting of economic sanctions against South Africa is further testimony to his lofty sense of responsibility and an illustration of the progress that has been achieved in the peaceful dismantling of apartheid. This development deserves the full attention of the international community, which should spare no effort in contributing to putting an end to the inter-ethnic violence and to provide the means by which the democratic forces can participate effectively in the long-awaited elections.

Algeria also follows attentively developments in several fraternal African countries. We encourage the peace efforts of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the relevant subregional organizations. We note with satisfaction the progress achieved in Mozambique, Rwanda and Liberia, and express the hope that those countries will overcome their problems with the help of the international community and devote all their energy to reconstruction and development. We hope that peace and harmony will be restored in Angola in accordance with the agreements reached between the two parties and with the resolutions of the Security Council, which have clearly determined where the responsibilities lie.

We are gravely concerned about the ongoing violence in Somalia, particularly in Mogadishu. It reminds us that humanitarian assistance and promoting political solutions must go hand in hand. The tragedy of Somalia is the most telling symbol to date of Africa's marginalization in international relations, and it attests to the tragic effects of the international community's inadequate response to Africa's clear needs with respect to economic and social development.

The tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a challenge to the world's conscience. In spite of the Security Council's many resolutions, the acquisition of territory by force, "ethnic cleansing" and trampling of all the norms of international law continue to prevail there. In the absence of firm action by the international community, the dismemberment of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a State Member of the United Nations, continues unabated, and puts at risk the peace and stability of that country and of the region as a whole. Algeria expresses its solidarity with the Bosnian people, and most particularly with its Muslims, who have been the victim of untold hardships. We appeal to the international community to reject the *fait accompli* imposed by aggression and help protect the

independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The international situation is not disturbing at the political and security levels alone but is also causing concern because of the persistence of world recession, the deteriorating economic situation of the developing countries, and the grave instability brought about by profound changes in international economic relations.

At a time when our interdependent world is in the midst of a complex and perilous historic transition, the communication gap between North and South must come to an end. The universal imperative of peace, security and development makes us consider the developing situation in the countries of the South. Most of them are facing the challenges of globalization with economies made uniquely vulnerable by the crushing weight of foreign indebtedness, their precarious internal balance and a highly unfavourable international economic environment.

The efforts of developing countries to promote economic growth and make the structural changes necessary for development are made far more difficult and risky by the erosion of multilateral cooperation, the conflicting interests of the dominant economic players and the constraints imposed by economic decisions that are too often selfish and exclusionary.

It is therefore essential to respond in a concerted fashion to the need for an orderly restructuring of international economic relations by establishing coordinated mechanisms to regulate the functioning of the world economy. In this context, it is important that the questions of debt, the scarcity of capital and technology inflows, to the countries of the South, the continued decline in commodity prices, the deterioration of the terms of trade and the difficulty of access to markets should become the focus of the international community's attention in order for us to find lasting solutions to such problems.

Such a collective concerted type of action that would be consonant with the requirements of adjustment by the developing countries themselves, is a must if we are to relaunch the international economy on a fair and well-balanced basis and make it possible for the developing countries to reap the expected benefits from the economic reforms they have undertaken. This would make meaningful the sacrifices being made by the developing countries in undertaking the necessary restructuring changes aimed at relaunching their economies and integrating them into the world economy. It would also make it possible for the international community to learn from the experiences acquired in debt management and structural adjustment programmes. Lastly, it would promote the creation of a true market environment in the developing countries.

The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro demonstrated that environmental protection is inconceivable without the promotion of sustainable development and sustained growth in the developing countries. We must therefore work determinedly towards achieving this objective and place sustainable development on the agenda of the new world order.

The holding of a world summit on social development scheduled for 1995 to deal with problems of human security affords us an opportunity to engage in an international dialogue on the implications and results of transition in the world. The United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions must grasp these new problems and contribute to developing a new framework for reflection and guidance to direct better the evolution of the international system. This endeavour may seem difficult, but it is essential for a better understanding of this new order, which we wish to be balanced, fair and consensual. It would also tend to support the Secretary-General's efforts to draw up an agenda for development.

At a time when our Organization faces various challenges, the reform, restructuring and revitalization process now under way in the United Nations acquires special importance. Restructuring the Secretariat and the economic and social sectors, revitalizing the Economic and Social Council, relaunching the operational development activities of the United Nations system and assuring the stable and predictable growth of its resources are all tasks that should be combined to give multilateral action the utmost credibility and effectiveness.

This undertaking is part of the vast effort to equip the United Nations for and adapt it to present and future challenges, and it requires participation by all of us. This endeavour is the vessel for feeding the faith of the peoples of the United Nations in an indivisible humankind. It is bound to succeed so long as our more democratic and more effective Organization is the active centre and catalyst for the promotion of fair and equitably shared development and the foundation of a peace built by mankind as a whole.

Mr. SULEIMENOV (Kazakhstan) (*interpretation from Russian*): Allow me first of all, Sir, to associate myself with the congratulations already extended to you on your election to the high office of President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session and to wish you every success in your endeavours.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, I should like to convey deep sympathy to the Government and the people of the friendly country of India for the heavy death toll and considerable material loss caused by the devastating earthquake on 30 September.

The international realities that form the background of the current session are a direct reflection of the development of extremely contradictory tendencies within the world community. On the one hand, during the year gone by since the beginning of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly we have witnessed a dynamic development of international relations along with increased United Nations activity in the resolution of global economic, social and environmental issues and in the promotion of peace and security. The achievement of agreement on the Middle East problem should undoubtedly be counted as a breakthrough in multilateral diplomacy, but, on the other hand, we must state with regret that no agreement has been reached so far on the cessation of hostilities in the former Yugoslavia, that the tension in Somalia has increased and that hotbeds of conflicts still smoulder in a number of republics of the former Soviet Union.

We have made a careful study of the Secretary-General's report (A/48/1) on the work of the Organization and share its principal conclusion that in order to produce enduring results there must at all costs be a new level of political will and realism.

The President of the United States, Mr. Clinton, pointed out in his statement on 27 September that the United Nations simply cannot be engaged in each and every one of the conflicts in the world. This goes without saying. But it is equally self-evident that the United Nations is today, and will remain in the foreseeable future, a body to which humanity - the world's nations and individuals - will link their aspirations for peace, development and human rights.

In these circumstances, in our opinion, a package of concrete measures aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations is called for. We believe that, along with a further definition of the functions of the United Nations main organs, the elimination of duplication in their activities and the adequate financing of United Nations peace-keeping operations, it is high time to consider the question of expanding the permanent membership of the Security Council. We are confident that this measure will enable the United Nations to respond more rapidly and objectively to the new, dangerous challenges of the times and eruptions of violence, regardless of where this might happen.

The harsh realities of the post-confrontation era have highlighted the urgency of redirecting the efforts of the world community towards eliminating the potential for disputes within a State or between States to escalate into military conflicts. Should we fail to resolve disputes at an early stage, we will simply reap fruits similar to those reaped in the former Yugoslavia, Nagorny-Karabakh and Tajikistan. This reaffirms once again the appropriateness of the idea of preventive diplomacy formulated by Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his report "An Agenda for Peace". Only by taking a series of preventive measures based on global and regional cooperation between nations can peace be ensured and maintained.

This is at the heart of the idea of creating a system of collective security in Asia within the framework of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICMA). As is known, this initiative was formulated comprehensively by Mr. Nazarbaev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, precisely one year ago, at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. To promote the realization of the initiative, Kazakhstan hosted two rounds of expert-level meetings within the framework of preparations for CICMA, which took place this year in Almaty and yielded promising results. At present, 25 Asian States are involved in the CICMA process. I take this opportunity to invite other States interested in strengthening confidence-building measures in Asia to join our efforts. I believe that today we should actively broaden our efforts to define the problems related to this initiative. I have in mind particularly the preparations for the conference of Foreign Ministers of Asian States which, in the view of experts, could be convened in 1994.

We note with satisfaction that the idea of regional cooperation in Asia has been endorsed by the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and has found a broad response within the United Nations, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States. This positive reaction to our

initiative fills us with confidence in its viability and its significance for the cause of peace in Asia.

Indeed, the States of the Asian region have an equally strong interest in the prevention and peaceful settlement of conflicts as well as in the prevention of the emergence of new hotbeds of regional and global tension. As an example I would mention the formation of the Defence Coalition Forces of the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which acted as a restraining factor in the Tajik conflict. Joint military units of Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan managed to reduce considerably the scale of military confrontation, saved the lives of thousands of civilians and provided relief for hundreds of thousands of refugees. In this context, the Republic of Kazakhstan, along with the other Commonwealth States, is asking for support for our joint appeal to recognize the Defence Coalition Forces of the CIS as the United Nations peacemaking force in that region.

Another important aspect of close cooperation between Asian States is the coordination of their efforts on environmental issues. The severe environmental problems of Kazakhstan are well known. The first among them is the problem of the Aral Sea. The critical situation in the Aral region has frequently been discussed at various international conferences and meetings of Heads of States. As a result, we now have a sizeable package of documents defining short-term and strategic solutions to the problem. We point in particular to the signing of the Agreement on Joint Activities in Preserving the Aral Sea and the Environmental Rehabilitation of the Region and the Statute of the International Fund for Preserving the Aral Sea. However, we are convinced that this environmental tragedy has effects far beyond the confines of the region. Today, only the collective efforts of the world community can bring about a solution to this problem. We therefore support the proposal put forward by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Karimov, to set up a special United Nations forum, perhaps a United Nations commission on the Aral Sea.

Another priority in the foreign policy of our Republic is the strengthening of intergovernmental relations within the CIS. We are confident that at present no member State of the Commonwealth is able effectively to pursue its internal and foreign policy in isolation from the policies of the other members of the CIS. In this context, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mr. Nazarbaev, has repeatedly proposed concrete measures to consolidate the common economic space and ensure social and political stability on a collective basis.

At the recent meeting of the Heads of State of the CIS in Moscow, an economic union of the Commonwealth was set up for the purpose of coordinating the policies of member States in various fields. This serves the interests of all members of the CIS.

Kazakhstan will remain active in promoting the integration of the members of the CIS. We strongly believe that all emerging political problems and conflict situations should be resolved in constructive and civilized ways. This idea is the essence of two recent statements by President Nazarbaev on the current critical situation in the Russian Federation.

Our State has a diversified foreign policy, and the expansion of cooperation in all fields with all countries is of utmost strategic importance to us. After signing the Lisbon Protocol of 23 May 1992, the Republic of Kazakhstan, along with other States successors to the USSR, was recognized as a party to the START I Treaty and undertook to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear State. At present, negotiations are under way with a number of States on cooperation in assisting Kazakhstan to meet its commitments to eliminate strategic offensive weapons.

In this context, I share the opinion of my Ukrainian colleague, Mr. Zlenko, about the extreme complexity of this problem. In our opinion, Kazakhstan would need considerable funds for this purpose: approximately $2 billion - not an easy sum to find in our national budget. These funds are needed not only to cover the dismantling of nuclear weapons, but also to eliminate the consequences of nuclear tests at the Semipalatinsk Testing Ground and to solve the Aral sea crisis as well.

Referring to the problem of the elimination of the consequences of nuclear tests at the now-closed Semipalatinsk Testing Ground, I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to the enormous damage to the health of the people of a vast region wrought by 466 nuclear tests in all environments. In varying degrees, almost half a million Kazakh citizens have suffered the deadly effects of nuclear tests. It is quite understandable, therefore, that Kazakhstan wholeheartedly supports a comprehensive and complete ban on nuclear tests.

One of the active areas of Kazakhstan's foreign policy is cooperation with the CSCE and the North Atlantic

Cooperation Council. The possibilities of Kazakhstan's more regular and active participation in CSCE activities were discussed in particular with the CSCE Chairman, Margaretha af Ugglas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, during a visit of the CSCE delegation to Almaty last June.

Broadly speaking, our foreign policy can now be described as dynamic and active. Kazakhstan's membership of the United Nations has allowed it to become actively involved in international life, a fact reflected in our membership now of 20 international organizations, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and others. The Republic's membership in the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and other international organizations is under consideration.

Kazakhstan's internal reforms are being carried out in accordance with the international treaties to which it has acceded. In spite of major economic problems, which are common in varying degrees to the States of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a strong legal basis for economic reforms has been laid down in our Republic.

The laws passed by the Kazakhstan Parliament are designed to develop medium- and small-scale business, attract and protect foreign investments and liberalize foreign trade. Providing a legal basis for foreign economic activity envisages a gradual decrease of export and import duties and the removal of free trade barriers which had to be imposed during the transition period because of the particular features of that time. Of course, such transformations will take more than one or two years, but Kazakhstan intends to carry them out as soon as possible.

Kazakhstan has now begun to attract international business. Following deals with Chevron and other major foreign companies, which have demonstrated to the world business community that Kazakhstan is anxious to attract foreign investment on a mutually beneficial basis and ensure a favourable environment for it, the flow of foreign investment into the Republic's economy has been growing steadily, and this is raising our hopes for the ultimate success of our reforms.

We understand clearly that now, at a time when our Republic is reaching out to the world community and is declaring its willingness to join it as an equal and respected member, it is of particular importance for us to affirm our compliance with internationally recognized standards of human rights. The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan adopted in January 1993 recognizes, in accordance with international standards, the primacy of rights and freedoms of the individual and places the primacy of the interests of the individual above the interests of the State and society, proclaims the ideas of civil peace and ethnic accord, and the equality of all nations and ethnic groups living in the Republic. I wish to draw attention to the fact that Kazakhstan is the only one of the newly formed States of the former USSR where national radio and TV programmes are broadcast in six different languages, newspapers and magazines are published in seven languages and instruction in schools is given in 18 languages.

Kazakhstan's commitment to equal rights for all ethnic groups in economic and social development was clearly stated at the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna last June. The documents adopted at that Conference will undoubtedly serve as an important guarantee of the observance of human rights both at the international and at the national levels.

However, the practical realization of human rights and freedoms is a long and gradual process which depends on many factors such as the level of economic and political development of the society, the ideological priorities, the national mentality, and so on. It is therefore unjustifiable for some people to assume the responsibility for setting human rights standards and to use their own interpretation of the concept as an instrument of pressure on certain countries in questions related to bilateral or multilateral relations.

In this context, Kazakhstan, while supporting efforts to affirm the universal nature of human rights, believes that it is necessary to take into account the specific national conditions of each member of the world community. The problem of human rights is not only pressing but also delicate, and hence it requires an extremely careful and balanced approach. It is this understanding which drives the internal ethnic policy of our country, a State the very stability of which depends upon the peaceful and mutually respectful coexistence of ethnic groups.

The forty-eighth session of the General Assembly is the second one in which Kazakhstan has participated as a full Member of the United Nations. Despite such recent membership in the Organization, Kazakhstan has actively

participated in the promotion of international relations, contributed to the strengthening of processes of integration, and has offered its own ideas on how to improve the United Nations.

We reaffirm our readiness to make an active contribution to the work of the Organization and to support all endeavours aimed at enhancing international cooperation and achieving peace and international accord.

At the same time I should like particularly to point out that the United Nations today is an international forum of 184 Member States, including those which, like Kazakhstan, only recently gained their independence. Considerable expansion of the membership over the past few years has, in our view, broadened the range and diversity of opinion within the Organization as well as pluralism in approaches to the analysis of international political events. To achieve consensus today we need a collective search for new principles of coexistence of States in the United Nations, as well as the improvement and adaptation of the Organization to the rapidly changing realities of modern life.

It is for this reason that we call upon all States Members of the United Nations to consider our proposal to convene a special session of the General Assembly devoted to the problems of strengthening international peace and security, expanding the scope and potential of preventive diplomacy, promoting human rights, and enhancing the role of the United Nations in an interdependent and integrated world.

We believe that on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations it would be extremely useful to discuss new goals and the challenges facing the Organization.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.